REMARKS

Claims 1, and 15-17 have been amended to contain more traditional punctuation for U.S. Practice. None of these claims has been amended in view of any requirement of patentability.

Claims 18 and 19 have been amended from the "use" format acceptable in European practice, to method claims complying with 35 U.S.C. § 101.

A mark-up version of the amended claims is attached hereto.

Questions are welcomed by the below-signed attorney for applicant.

Respectfully submitted,

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Amended) Linker system for activating surfaces for bioconjugation having the following general formula (I):

$$X\text{-}[(Y_1)_i\text{-}Q\text{-}(Y_2)_j]_k\text{-}Z \quad (I)$$

wherein:

X is a reactive group capable of covalently binding to a surface,

Z is a reactive group capable of covalently binding to a biomolecule, ~~with the proviso that~~

X is not Z,

Y_1 and Y_2 are, independently from each other, CR_1R_2, ~~with~~

R_1 and R_2 ~~being~~ are, independently from each other, H, C_1-C_4 alkyl, C_1-C_4 alkoxy or C_1-C_4 acyloxy,

i, j, and k are, independently from each other, an integer in the range from 1 to 10, ~~with the proviso that~~

the total number of C atoms in Y_1 and Y_2, the C atoms of R_1 and R_2 not included, is in the range of 2 to 100, ~~and~~

Q is a hydrophilic atom or group selected from the group consisting of O, NH, C=O, O-C=O and CR_3R_4, ~~wherein~~

R_3 and R_4 are, independently from each other, selected from the group consisting of H, OH, C_1-C_4 alkoxy and C_1-C_4 acyloxy, and ~~with the proviso that~~

R_3 and R_4 are not H at the same time~~;~~, ~~and that for~~

wherein when Q = NH, Z is not NH_2; and ~~wherein in the case of~~

wherein when k > 1, the Q's for each $[(Y_1)_i\text{-}Q\text{-}(Y_2)_j]_k$ are independently selected from each other.

15. (Twice Amended) Process for the detection of a biomolecule which is a partner of a specifically interacting system of complementary binding partners, comprising the steps of:

a) contacting a surface according to claim 10 with a sample suspected to contain the complementary binding partner,

b) removing non-specifically bound sample components in a washing step, and

c) detecting ~~the~~ specifically bound sample components.

16. (Amended) Process according to claim 15 wherein for said detecting, a colored, fluorescent, bioluminescent, chemoluminescent, phosporescent or radioactive label; an enzyme; an antibody or a functional fragment or derivative thereof, a protein A/gold based system; a biotin/avidin/streptavidin based system; or an enzyme electrode based system is used.

17. (Twice Amended) Process for the isolation of a biomolecule which is a partner of a specifically interacting system of complementary binding partners, comprising the steps of:

a) contacting a surface according to claim 10 with a sample suspected to contain the biomolecule complementary binding partner,

b) removing non-specifically bound sample components in a washing step, and, optionally,

c) eluting ~~the~~ specifically bound sample components.

18. (Twice Amended) ~~Use of~~A method of affinity chromatography comprising the steps of :

providing a surface according to claim 10 as an affinity matrix; and

performing affinity chromatography with the affinity matrix.

19. (Twice Amended) ~~Use of~~A method of detecting a biomolecule comprising the steps of:

providing a sensor chip or biochip comprising a surface according to claim 10 ~~in a sensor chip or biochip~~; and

detecting a biomolecule with the sensor chip or biochip.